Recently, there has been a great deal of confusion and controversy about the appropriations process. In recent years, corrupt lobbyists and members of Congress like Jack Abramoff and Duke Cunningham exposed the weaknesses of a nontransparent earmarking process. Democratic leadership has taken strong measures to counter abuses by demanding unprecedented levels of public oversight and funding only the most worthy projects.

In 2009, the House reduced earmark funds by over forty percent compared to 2006. With the added challenges of a weak economy and ballooning budget deficits, Congress and the President will reduce earmarks even further for Fiscal Year 2010. Democratic leadership will not only reduce earmark levels by fifty percent from 2006; these projects will account for 1%, or less, of the discretionary budget. The Obama administration further announced a full executive branch review of requests.

I wholeheartedly support these reforms. I also know how important earmarks are to local communities throughout Oregon. Although the process has been abused in the past, I continue to deeply appreciate hearing from Oregonians on the needs of our state. Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have supported our community's interests through the appropriations process and I continue to think this is an important service to provide to Oregonians. As Congress works to stabilize the economy, I will focus on projects that promote maximum benefits for the community and innovative initiatives that leverage funds, create jobs and serve as community models.

Listed below are all projects that local governments and other organizations have submitted to my office. I will approve only a portion of these projects for consideration by the Appropriations Committee, and will make this list public in April.

Earl Bhummeum

Thank you for your interest in this important area.

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